New Hampshire Coronavirus Disease 2019 Twice a Month Call for Education and Childcare Partners

May 19, 2021

Ben Chan Elizabeth Talbot Beth Daly Lindsay Pierce

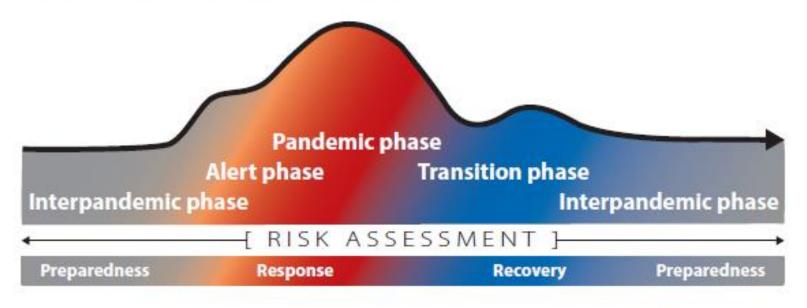
Q&A Session: To ask a question use the Q&A feature in Zoom

- Hover over bottom of Zoom screen to find "Q&A"
- This is a public call, do NOT share confidential/sensitive information
- Ask general questions, individual consultation should be directed to the Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 (ask for a public health staff members)



We Are in a Transition Phase of the Pandemic

Figure 1. The continuum of pandemic phases^a



This continuum is according to a "global average" of cases, over time, based on continued risk assessment and consistent with the broader emergency risk management continuum.



NH DPHS Guidance for People Who Are Fully Vaccinated Against COVID-19



CDC's Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People

- CDC's <u>Guidance for Fully Vaccinated</u> (updated May 13th): "Fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules and regulations..."
- CDC's K-12 School Recommendations (updated May 15th): schools should continue to use current COVID-19 prevention strategies for at least the remainder of the 2020-21 school year:
 - Universal and correct use of masks should be required
 - Physical distancing should be maximized to the greatest extent possible
- CDC's <u>Child Care Guidance</u> (updated May 7th):
 - Everyone 2 years and older should wear a mask when around people who
 do not live in their household (except when eating or sleeping)
 - Masks should be worn in addition to physical distancing
 - Wearing a mask is especially important indoors and when physical distancing is difficult to implement or maintain





Bureau of Infectious Disease Control

NH Public Health Recommendations for People Who Are <u>Fully</u> <u>Vaccinated</u> When Around Others <u>From</u> Outside the Household May 17, 2021

- COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing asymptomatic and symptomatic infection, and help to reduce spread of COVID-19
- Mitigation measures, however, are most effective when implemented at a population level (i.e., everyone does them)
- NH DPHS continues to recommend that everybody, including fully vaccinated people, continue to wear face masks and physically distance when indoors in public settings and around other people who are not fully vaccinated, or whose vaccination status is unknown



Should I Wear a Face Mask and Physically Distance in Settings Where I Am Around Other People? (Guidance for Fully Vaccinated People)

TABLE: NH recommendations for physical distancing and face mask use for <u>fully vaccinated</u> people in settings where there is potential for close contact with others.

		Other Peoples' Vaccination Status	
		All fully vaccinated	Vaccination status unknown or not all are fully vaccinated
Location	Indoors	NO*	AES AES
	Outdoors	No*	() so

^{*}Unless required to by a business or organization, or a person desires maximal protection

Note: Please note that if you are significantly immune compromised, then the recommendations above may not apply to you; please discuss your risk and protective measures with a trusted healthcare provider.

Additional NH Guidance

- People who are unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated should continue to wear face masks and physically distance when around other people indoors, or outdoors if unable to consistently maintain 6 feet of physical separation from others (unchanged guidance)
- NH DPHS continues to also recommend that businesses and organizations implement the layers of protection outlined in the NH <u>Universal Best Practices</u>, irrespective of a person's vaccination status



Rationale for NH's Guidance

- Fewer than 50% of NH's population is fully vaccinated
- Level of community transmission remains "substantial"
- Increasing vaccination rates combined with continued use of mitigation measures will drive COVID-19 numbers lower more quickly, and help us exit from the pandemic
- No vaccine is 100% effective continued use of face masks and physical distancing by everybody in public locations will help protect people who are unable to be vaccinated (e.g., due to age), or people unable to mount an adequate immune response, until community transmission is lower
- Businesses/organizations need implementable guidance they can't verify a person's vaccination status making it difficult to implement CDC's guidance



Get Vaccinated!

- In the next several weeks, level of community transmission with likely continue to decrease
- We will more fully implement CDC guidance over the coming weeks (likely by the end of June)
- People who are not yet vaccinated (or not yet fully vaccinated), should schedule themselves to get a COVID-19 vaccine, if eligible (everybody 12 years of age and older)
- As we enter the summer months, more people will likely be out in public locations without masks and without physical distancing – get vaccinated to protect yourself!



Planning for Next Year & the NH Universal Best Practices



School District Reopening Plans for Fall 2021

- This is a requirement of NH DOE
- There is no current NH DPHS or CDC guidance for K-12 school operations in the fall
- We cannot predict what will happen with the pandemic by the Fall, whether there will be another winter surge, or when COVID-19 vaccinations will be available for younger children
- Likely the current NH <u>Grades K-12 Back-To-School Guidance</u> will go away at the end of this year
- We suggest you apply the NH <u>Universal Best Practices</u> and experience over the last year to developing plans now
 - "We are planning as if we are keeping everything we currently have in place because it is easier to remove a layer than add one back in." (comment from one superintendent about planning for the Fall)









Home

Visitors

Governor's Website





Effective May 8, 2021, the Universal Best Practices replaces all existing "Safer at Home 2.0" business operations guidance in place since March 2020. These Universal Best Practices are for all individuals, businesses, and organizations to consider.

Universal Best Practices

Effective May 8, 2021



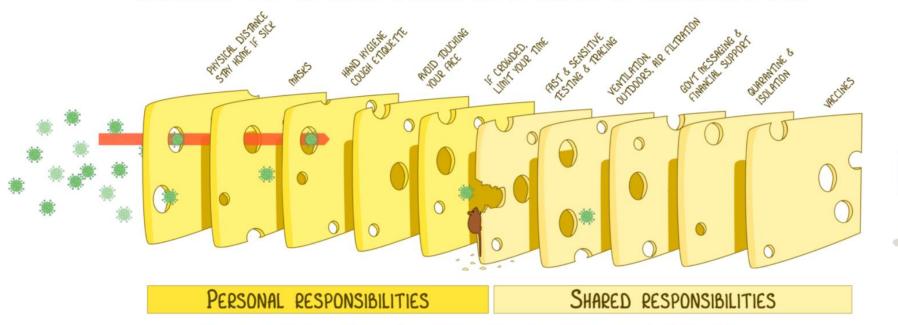
- Universal Best Practices
- Overnight Congregate Settings for Children
- K-12 Back to School Guidance



The Importance of Layered Protection

THE SWISS CHEESE RESPIRATORY VIRUS PANDEMIC DEFENCE

RECOGNISING THAT NO SINGLE INTERVENTION IS PERFECT AT PREVENTING SPREAD



EACH INTERVENTION (LAYER) HAS IMPERFECTIONS (HOLES).

(MULTIPLE LAYERS IMPROVE SUCCESS.



Guidance by Mitigation Measure

- 1. Planning and communication
- 2. Vaccination against COVID-19
- 3. Identifying and excluding people with COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, or risk factors for exposure (i.e. screening)
- 4. Testing
- 5. Social/physical distancing
- 6. Face mask use
- 7. Cohorting and limiting group sizes
- 8. Modifying layouts and processes
- 9. Hand hygiene
- 10. Cleaning & disinfection, and avoiding shared objects
- 11. Improving ventilation
- 12. Public health contact tracing, isolation, & quarantine

The Following Slides are
Considerations for K-12 Schools in
Planning for School Operations
Starting in September 2021. They are
NOT Intended to Necessarily Reflect
Current Public Health Guidance



1. Planning and Communication

- Develop policies and procedures that incorporate layers of protection to prevent introduction and spread of COVID-19
- Clearly communicate policies and procedures to staff, students, families, etc. to help set expectations for what is being planned for the Fall



2. COVID-19 Vaccination

- Vaccination just opened for 12-15 year olds, so this age group will have had the opportunity to be fully vaccinated by opening of school next year
- Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines are currently being studied down to 6 months of age
- Preliminary information is that around September, additional age groups may be authorized to get these vaccines
- You will be starting school in the Fall likely with students under the age of 12 who are not fully vaccinated

3. Screening for Symptoms or Risk Factors of COVID-19

- Active screening for symptoms and risk factors for exposure can/should go away in the Fall 2021
- But have a low-threshold for identifying kids with respiratory illness (i.e., colds) and sending them home for evaluation and COVID-19 testing if they're not vaccinated (or test at school if you have the capacity?)
- There should be proactive messaging to families and staff that people with symptoms of COVID-19, even cold symptoms, need to stay home and be evaluated for COVID-19 testing

4. Testing

- State-run testing centers will be going away
- Staff and students will need to use the local medical system/providers for COVID-19 testing
- Have a low threshold for testing if an unvaccinated person has new symptoms of COVID-19



5. Social/Physical Distancing

- Full in-person learning recommended
- Maximize physical distance



6. Face Mask Use

- Face masks have unfortunately become a controversial issue and it is becoming increasingly difficult to get people to wear face masks
- But there may still be a role for face masks, especially indoors – this is dependent on vaccination status of your population, and level of COVID-19 in the community come the Fall
- One place you could consider pulling back on face masks (for next year) is in lower risk outdoor settings
- CDC likely will be putting out new guidance at some point for K-12 schools next year which may be helpful



7. Cohorting and Limiting Group Sizes

- Cohorting remains an option but probably doesn't need to be as strict as what was originally recommended
- If groups are formed, keep them smaller
- Still attempt to keep different groups separate, if possible



8. Modified Layouts and Processes

- Consider assigned seating and limiting classroom movement and mingling, if possible
- As more people become vaccinated, and if levels of community transmission are low, likely you can get back to more normal classroom/group activities



9. Hand Hygiene

 Yes, continue to promote good and frequent hand hygiene



10. Cleaning & Disinfection, and Avoiding Shared Objects

- Refer to CDC guidance for <u>cleaning and disinfecting</u> your facility
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection
- Continue to avoid sharing objects that might be contaminated with a person's respiratory secretions or saliva
- Otherwise, focus on good hand hygiene



11. Improving Ventilation

- Refer to CDC guidance on <u>Ventilation in Buildings</u>
- Continue to maximize building/room air turn-over (i.e., replacing indoor stagnant air with external fresh air)
- Upgrade HVAC systems and air filtration units, open windows, incorporate fans that bring in outdoor air
- Limit simply circulating internal air
- Ventilation and climate control are two separate issues
 - both should be addressed



12. Public Health Contact Tracing, Isolation, and Quarantine

- Public health contact tracing will de-escalate at some point
- Likely by the beginning of next year, we will not be investigating every case of COVID-19, but will focus on outbreaks and clusters (more of an influenza model)
- People with COVID-19 will still need to isolate (see <u>self-isolation guide</u>)
- Contact tracing will likely focus on identifying those at highest risk (e.g., household contacts) who are unvaccinated (see <u>self-quarantine guide</u>)
- Plans remain uncertain stay tuned!



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Next Call Will Be Wednesday June 2nd from 3:30 – 4:30 pm



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